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On LU Xun'S Un-fluent Translation

SUR LA TRADUCTION UN-FLUIDE DE LU XUN

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Abstract: Fluency as an acknowledged translation criterion has been in a dominant position in China for a long time. Translators have been striving for this fluency; readers and critics have been evaluating translated versions according to this criterion. But in translation history, even at the palm time of fluent translation, exceptions can still be found. Un-fluency as a translating strategy was frequently used and highly advocated by some important translators like LU Xun. The author of this paper has expected to explore the main reasons for LU Xun's un-fluent translating strategy; find the specific translating methods applied in producing his un-fluent versions; and analyze the influence and significance of his un-fluent translation both on literary tradition and translation theory and practice. This paper attempts to make a descriptive study of un-fluent translation as a history phenomenon by taking LU Xun's translation as a typical example.

Key words: Deviation; Resistancy; LU Xun; Un-fluent Translation

Résumé: La fluidité en tant qu'un critère de traduction reconnu est dans une position dominante en Chine depuis une longue période. Les traducteurs s'efforcent d'atteindre cette fluidité; les lecteurs et les critiques évaluent la qualité des oeuvres traduites selon ce critère. Pourtant dans l'histoire de la traduction, même à l'époque d'or de la traduction fluide, il y a toujours des exceptions à trouver. L'un-fluidité a été fréquemment utilisée et hautement préconisée par certains traducteurs importants comme LU Xun comme une stratégie de traduction. L'auteur de cet article tente d'explorer les raisons principales de cette stratégie de LU Xun couramment traduction; de trouver les méthodes spécifiques appliquées dans sa traduction un-fluide, et d'analyser l'influence et l'importance de sa traduction laborieuse à la fois sur la tradition de traduction littéraire et sur la théorie de la traduction et de la pratique. Ce document tente de faire une étude descriptive sur la traduction un-fluide comme un phénomène historique en prenant la traduction de LU Xun comme un exemple typique.

Mots-clés: déviation; résistance; LU Xun; traduction un-fluide

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1. INTRODUCTION

Undoubtedly, un-fluent translation is a kind of deviation from the traditional translation criteria. Lawrence Venuti (1995: 24) defined un-fluent translation as:

A translation eschews a fluent strategy in order to reproduce in the translation whatever features of the foreign text abuse or resist dominant cultural values in the source language. The translator chooses foreignizing method, that is, to register the linguistic and cultural difference of the foreign text.

In translation history, scholars have been searching the field of un-fluent translation though not systematically. We can find Saint Jerome's statement about word for word translation in the case of mysteries. Dyden's use of imitation or metaphrase means the process of converting an author word for word, line by line, from one tongue into another. Goethe's highest and last mode of translation will seek to achieve perfect identity between the original text and that of the translation. As a result, this type of translation will meet with great resistance from general public because of its low readability (Steiner 2001: 271). In translating practice, some translators like LU Xun deliberately choose foreignizing translating strategy and therefore produce un-fluent translation, which was generally considered as the deviation from the traditional translation criteria.

However, un-fluent translation is undergoing the change from being criticized to being analyzed as a translation phenomenon. With the emergence and development of more marginal translation theories, translation studies paradigms are experiencing great changes. Descriptive approach turned up as a more popular approach in translation studies than the normative approach. People used to care much about "what the translators should do to achieve a good translation", while the descriptive approach lays much weight on describing and analyzing objectively the phenomenon of translation itself. As a translation phenomenon, un-fluent translation must have its social and cultural background and its inevitable influence. Shifts and changes in the technique of translating did not occur at random. Rather, they were intimately linked with the way in which different cultures, at different times, came to terms with the phenomenon of translation, with the challenge posed by the existence of the Other and the need to select from a number of possible strategies for dealing with that Other (Lefevere 1992: 12).

2. LU XUN'S UN-FLUENT TRANSLATION

In November 1929, LIANG Shi-qiu wrote an article named "On Mr. LU Xun's 'hard translation'", in which he sharply criticized that LU Xun's translation was "hard", "awkward" and "extremely unintelligible". ...

1929年9月，梁實秋寫了一篇文章，叫《論魯迅先生的“硬譯”》，猛烈批評了魯迅的翻譯生硬、“別扭”、“極端難懂”。……我們實在不能不同意梁實秋的说法：“讀這樣的書，就如同看地圖一般，要伸著手來尋找句法的線索位置” (Cited in Wang Hongzhi 1999: 218-219)

"Reading the book of this kind is just like reading a map---readers would have to use their hands to probe for the clue of grammatical structure." (translated by the author) LU Xun's translation had been commented unfavorably because of the unfluency in his translation. Here are two examples from LU Xun's translation:

……我在這裡，是將用也可以稱為從反對的說明方法這方法的罷。就是，我將先令人想起唯物史觀是什麼，而其次，則示人以與之相反的，同一對象的唯物論底解釋，和它是怎樣的不同。

說是因了盡要滿足欲望的力和正相反的壓抑力的糾葛衝突而發生的精神底傷害，伏藏在無意識界裡這一點，我即使但從文藝上的見地來看……

(《苦悶的象徵》 廣川白村) (魯迅全集 13 卷 P42)

Readers can find from the above examples the difficult grammar and awkward sentence structure, which lead to the obvious unfluency in the version. So puzzles might arise that why Lu allowed such an un-fluent version, which was not in accordance with the acknowledged criteria of translation. LU Xun is a native speaker of TL here and is considered a great writer himself, so it could not have been his carelessness or poor TL (Chinese) competence. Therefore, it is significant to find out and analyze both the translators' personal intention and the objective background lying behind this translating strategy.

2.1 Reasons of Deviation and Resistancy

In spite of the above un-fluent versions, LU Xun's earlier translation is by no means un-fluent. He once said that when he was young, he was rather reluctant to take the literal translation since free translation was quite popular at that time. But his co-translation work with his brother Zhou Zuoren (*Stories from Abroad* 《域外小說集》) marks his transition from free translation to literal translation and to later even almost word for word translation. He recalled later:

《域外小說集》發行於一九〇七年或一九〇八年，我與周作人還在東京。當時中國流行林琴南用古文翻譯的外國小說，文章確實是好，但誤譯很多。我們對此感到不滿，想加以糾正，才幹起來的，……譯文很艱澀。(LU Xun 1932)

(《魯迅論外國文學》 1982: 47)

So LU Xun and his brother took to literal translation to resist the free translation vogue and to correct mistranslation in the late Qing Dynasty. He was also aware that his (and his brother's) translation was quite difficult and awkward (譯文很艱澀)。Maybe this is the initial purpose of LU Xun taking to literal translation as a challenge to free translation and fluency. But only to correct mistranslation, LU Xun didn't have to go to the other end (un-fluent translation) so far away, which also caused trouble to readers.

Lawrence Venuti (1995: 24) in his book *The Translator's Invisibility* rendered a name to this type of untraditional un-fluent translation by firstly quoting Philip Lewis's concept about it.

It acknowledges the abusive, equivocal relationship between the translation and the foreign text and eschews a fluent strategy in order to reproduce in the translation whatever features of the foreign text abuse or resist dominant cultural values in the source language.

Then Venuti said such a translation strategy could be called resistancy (Venuti, 1995: 24). A fluent strategy produces a kind of transparent discourse, which gives the readers the illusion that they are reading the original text for its fluency and naturalness. As it has been mentioned earlier the un-fluent translation could not have resulted from LU Xun's carelessness or poor language competence, so we may presume LU Xun purposefully chose to or meant to eschew a fluent strategy.

Fluency has always been an acknowledged principle in evaluating a translation. There are mainly two reasons for the prevalence of fluent translating strategy. One is translator's or reader's prejudice against foreign works and lack of respect for cultural others. The other reason is to seek for financial benefits (Chen Pingyuan, 1989:38-40). Chinese translators' and readers' lack of respect for cultural others is derived from the closed-door policy adopted by Qing Dynasty. People at that time were highly ignorant of outside world and seldom doubted China's central position. We can call this self-arrogance of one's own culture cultural complacency, according to Venuti. However, when the translator becomes aware of

the defect in certain aspects of his own culture or even when he personally gets rather unsatisfied with those defects, this so-called cultural complacency in his mind will be undermined and collapse consequently. Thus, the translator's translating strategy formerly decided by the complacency will undergo changes. Translators will show their concern about foreign cultures and give some respects to cultural others. Probably, they would go into the other direction---alienation, which is related to un-fluent translation rather than fluent domestication. This is also the case for readers' part --- when the readers sense the drawback of certain element of their culture and feel the constraints laid on their thinking and cultural development, they begin to show suspect to that cultural complacency and further dissatisfaction with fluent domestication in the texts. As a result, readable and fluent translation is not necessarily highly accepted by the TL readers. Then it is no strangeness in the transforming from fluent popularity to un-fluent strategy of translation.

Translators adopt resistancy (un-fluent translation strategy), seeking to free the reader of translation, as well as the translator, from the cultural constraints that ordinarily govern their reading and writing and threaten to overpower and domesticate the foreign text, annihilating its foreignness. Therefore, such a translation strategy can best be called resistancy, not merely because it avoids fluency, but because it challenges the target-language culture (Venuti 1995: 24).

As a cultural vanguard and revolutionist, LU Xun was far-sighted and sensitive enough to find something unsatisfactory in Chinese cultural canon and must have got the will to free the reader and translator from certain cultural constraints.

Since the end of 19th century, closed-door policy adopted by Qing Dynasty was stopped by the large-scale invasion launched by western countries. Chinese people had got a "chance" to see a real world outside China. Some patriotic intellectuals like LU Xun began to seek truth from the successful experience of foreign countries, so they started the introduction of western ideas through translating western works. However, there appeared a confusing problem concerning the target language in the process of translation. As we know, traditionally in the Chinese language, speech and writing had a distinct gap. So which one should translators translate into? "May Fourth" New Literary Movement, in the hope of enlightening Chinese people, advocated the overall use of pai-hua or vernacular Chinese both in speech and writing (Xie Tianzhen 2000: 120). But this transformation is not so easy, because pai-hua itself of that time is far from perfect. Generally speaking, language as a communication media will not cause problems in the process of translation, but when the language is in a special condition, such as experiencing great changes, or at the developing stage, the language used in translation may become a complicated problem (XieTianzhen 2000:119). There lacked a clear-cut criterion for translators, so they just tried to make the language plain and easy enough to cater to the so-called common readers. Besides, readers with higher education and those from ruling class did not actually accept vernacular Chinese, which they considered as rude and only for those people with little education. With this attitude, they did not make real effort to propel the development of pai-hua. Consequently, at the initial stage of pai-hua movement, pai-hua was at a rather poor level.

As Venuti has pointed out, translators seek to free the reader of translation as well as writers from the cultural constraints that ordinarily governs their reading and writing. As a translator and writer, LU Xun, with a distinctive insight, pointed out to the depth of the matter, associated the language of people with the mind of people (Li Yongyan 1998: 20). LU Xun considered pai-hua at that time is kind of constraint that held back people's mind and development of literature. The "crude" language that the contemporary common people spoke, he observed, was not only destitute, but sloppy in grammar as well, which was a reflection of the confusion of the peoples' mind. A muddle-headed people using a sloppy language were no worthy people (Li Yongyan 1998: 20).

LU Xun's dissatisfaction with pai-hua at that time was the direct cause for his later un-fluent translation. He once said,

中國的文或話，法子實在太不精密了，作文的秘訣，是在避去熟字，就是好文章，講話的時候，也時時要詞不達意，這就是話不夠用，所以教員講書，也必須借助於粉筆（LU Xun 1931）（魯迅論外國文學 1982：53）。

The grammar of both Chinese written and spoken language is too imprecise. The knack of composition is to avoid familiar words, and then the composition is well done. In speech, sometimes the words fail to convey the idea, which was caused by the inadequacy of language, so the teacher has to turn to the aid of chalk to give a lecture in class. (translated by the author)

To treat this bad condition, he said, the people should take pains to absorb elements that were alien, and hopefully part of the new elements would be integrated into the language someday. Therefore, translation played an important role in importing new ways of expression so as to better Chinese *pai-hua*. There were actually the examples of re-founding “native language” through the way of translation in history, among which the most famous one is that Martin Luther’s translation of the Bible greatly promoted the founding of modern German (Xie Tianzhen, Wang Hongzhi 2000: 135). So this is not an invention of LU Xun. He had cited the example of Japanese language importing the sentence structures and grammar rules from Western languages. He said:

“日本語和歐美得很‘不同’，但他們逐漸添加了新句法，……。開初自然是‘尋找句法的線索位置’，很給了一些人不‘愉快’的，但經過找尋和習慣，現在已經同化，成為已有了。”（LU Xun 1930）（魯迅論外國文學 1982：51）

Japanese language is quite different from Western languages, but it has imported new syntax from western languages ... In the beginning, it is naturally necessary to “probe the clue of grammatical structure”, which would quite displease some people, but through probing and getting familiar, the imported syntax has been assimilated and become its own. (translated by the author)

LU Xun preserved much of sentential structure of SL even by translating word by word, which resulted in un-fluent translation. According to LU Xun, to import grammar rules of foreign language would make *pai-hua* more precise (Xie Tianzhen, Wang Hongzhi 2000:136). Though he was aware of that the readers would feel strange for the foreign grammar in the translated version and was hardly accustomed to this un-fluent translation, he still insisted his way of translation for he believed as time went by, readers would sooner or later accept those foreign sentences. It was LU Xun’s expectation that at least some of the foreign language usages adopted by the translator, which appeared “hard” and “un-fluent,” would someday become the “fluent” part of the Chinese language with the un-fluent leftovers kicked away. He said,

“一面儘量的輸入，一面儘量的消化，吸收，可用的傳下去了，渣滓就聽他剩落在過去裡……但這情形也當然不是永遠的，其中的一部分，將從“不順”而成為“順”，有一部分，則因為到底“不順”而被淘汰，被踢開。”（LU Xun 1931）（魯迅論外國文學 1982：52）

As a reader and writer, LU Xun felt awful about certain cultural constraints that hindered the people’s thinking and the development of Chinese culture. He believed that current Chinese *pai-hua* was so far from precise or sufficient that Chinese people could not accurately and fully express their ideas. This dissatisfaction turned then away from fluent domestication that resulted from cultural complacency when translating foreign texts. Instead, he made effort to free the readers from the constraints by importing new elements of cultural others. LU Xun translated extremely literally to import foreign grammatical rules to Chinese *pai-hua*.

2.2 Strategies for Deviation and Resistancy

The German theologian and philosopher Friedrich Schleiermacher in an 1813 lecture on the different methods of translation argued that,

“There are only two. Either the translator leaves the author in peace, as much as possible, and moves the reader towards him; or he leaves the reader in peace, as much as possible, and moves the author towards him” (Venuti 1995: 20).

Lawrence Venuti considered this formulation a decisive one, and further explained it. He concluded that Schleiermacher allowed the translator to choose between a domesticating method, an ethnocentric reduction of the foreign text to target-language cultural values, bringing the author back home, and a foreignizing method, an ethnodeviant pressure on those values to register the linguistic and cultural difference of the foreign text, sending the reader abroad (Venuti 1995: 19). Fluency had been a dominating canon in evaluating a translation both in China and Anglo-American culture. In fluent translation, translators make effort to bring the author back home, while resistancy or un-fluent translation strategy force translators and their readers to reflect on the ethnocentric violence of translation and hence to write and read translated texts in ways that seek to recognize the linguistic and cultural difference of foreign texts. The search for alternatives to fluent translation leads to theories and practices that aim to signify the foreignness of the foreign text. However, foreignizing or bringing author back home is rather general, so Venuti argued that the translator aim to preserve the linguistic and cultural difference of foreign text (Venuti 1995: 101).

LU Xun took up translation in 1903 when he published his first translation work. During the ending years of Qing Dynasty, free translation had been a kind of vogue (Wang Hongzhi 1999: 201). In order to make their translation accepted by the readers, translators at that time frequently made alterations to the original texts in the process of translating. For instance, they would omit the parts that were difficult for the readers to understand, as Lin Shu omitted the parts talking about western religion when translating “Uncle Tom’s cabin”. Translators also used traditional patterns of Chinese novel to replace the foreign patterns so that the translations were more fluent and familiar to Chinese readers. Besides, translators wanted to get both political and financial support from the ruling class, so they made adaptation of the original texts so as to produce a translation catering to the demands of ruling class. They might add some didactic parts or omit some episodes that would violate the moral norms in TL culture. These translation methods reflected TL-oriented attitudes and disrespect to SL culture. As a result, there appeared considerable unfaithful translation and even mistranslation (Wang Hongzhi 1999: 205).

LU Xun in the early period of his translation career also adopted free translation, but very soon in 1909, he co-published *Stories from Abroad* (《域外小說集》) with his brother Zhou Zuoren, which marked his great change of translation methods---from free translation to literal translation (Wang Hongzhi 1999: 193). LU Xun challenged the unfaithfulness and arbitrary alteration to the original texts by applying literal translation. Literal translation in common sense refers to the faithfulness to the original content, but LU Xun’s literal translation is far beyond this. He laid much emphasis on the faithfulness to original forms, and the uniqueness in his literal translation is that he emphasized the faithfulness at the level of grammar (Wang Hongzhi 1999: 222). Literal translation in his mind is closely related to sentence structure. Of course, his literal translation aroused much disagreement and criticism; what’s more, readers could hardly accept his translation at its first appearance. Some scholars began to argue with LU Xun about this issue. All this but made LU Xun more distinctly insisted his own idea. He advocated “rather faithful than fluent”, and practised this literal method in his own translation. LU Xun preserved grammatical structures of SL in his Chinese version. When commenting on two of his translation versions, he said that he did not even change the word order of the original sentences, and almost used word-by-word translation with few exceptions (大抵連語句的前後次序也不甚顛倒; 除了幾處不得已的地方, 幾乎是逐字譯。) (Wang Hongzhi 1999: 224, 223). He argued for his translation in 1931 that he chose extreme literal translation in order to be faithful to the original.

我自己的譯法, 是譬如“山背後太陽落下去了”, 雖然不順, 也決不改作“日落山陰”, 因為原意以山為主, 改了就變成以太陽為主了。(LU Xun 1931) (魯迅論外國文學 1982: 52)

Faithfulness in form often leads to grammatically incorrect version since different languages have quite different sets of grammar rules, especially the languages belonging to different families, so there appeared un-fluent translation. For example:

LU Xun’s Chinese version :

……但那丈夫卻患了庸俗的名譽心，成為法律的一夥，觀察問題，只從男性底的視角。
(《伊孛生的工作態度》有島武郎)
(魯迅全集 16 卷 p130)

……然而直到現在，沒有這樣大時代的總括底的敘述。
(《蘇維埃聯邦從 Maxim Gorky 期待著什麼》)
(魯迅全集 16 卷 p334)

……他們應該力避貴族底的態度。
(《蘇聯文學理論及文學批評的現狀》 上田進)
(魯迅全集 16 卷 p547)

Here LU Xun is actually requiring for standardizing the use of “底” and “的” by English (or of other western languages ---note of the author) rules of word-formation (Wang Hongzhi 1999: 232). He just kept the suffixes of the adjectives or imitated the word formation in other languages and translated them into Chinese “底”, and then placed “的” before the nouns. This is one of the radical examples of LU Xun’s translation. He believed absorbing new ways of expression, which made this Chinese version even more un-fluent though, would enrich Chinese pai-hua.

One more point of LU Xun’s literal translation is that he tried hard to preserve the original mood and flavor in Chinese version. He said, “... If I were to cut the redundant phrases, it would lose its original flavor. I must either go on producing these hard translation, or produce none at all. I can only hope readers will be willing to make necessary mental effort to read it.” (LU Xun 1934, Let Jokes be Jokes) LU Xun declared, he would rather make his translation “faithful than smooth” (宁信而不顺). The un-fluency in LU Xun’s translation would be viewed more clearly by the following comparison with LIANG Shi-qiu’s version:

Original English version supplied by LIANG Shi-qiu:

“It may be well first to premise that I do not wish to maintain that any strictly social animal, if its intellectual faculties were to become as active and as highly developed as in man, would acquire exactly the same moral sense as ours. In the same manner as various animals have some sense of beauty, though they admire widely different objects, so they might have a sense of right and wrong, though led by it to follow widely different lines of conduct.” (Qtd. WANG Hong-zhi, 1999)

LU Xun’s version:

“我想，在最初，是有將[我]和恰如各各的群居的動物，如果那知底能力而發達到在人類似的活動和高度，便將獲得和我們一樣的道德底概念那樣的思想，是[相距]很遠的事，宣言出來的必要的。

正如在一切動物，美的感情是天稟的一樣，雖然它們也被非常之多的種類的事物引得喜歡，它們[也]會有關於善和惡的概念，雖然這概念也將它們引到和我們完全反對的行動去。” (魯迅全集 17 卷 p39)

LIANG Shi-qiu’s translation:

“我首先要聲明，我並不願主張說，任何嚴格的群居動物，假如它的智力變得和人類一樣的活潑，並一樣高度的發達，便能夠得到和我們完全相同的道德的感念。同樣的，各種動物都有一些美感，雖然它們所欣賞的是頗不相同的東西，故它們也許有是非的感念，雖然會被這是非的感念引導著去做頗不相同的行動。”

It has been admitted that LU Xun's translation, quite European-slanted and with long stretches of abstruse wording, is really more difficult to understand than that of LIANG Shi-qiu. Yet for the sake of preserving the "original flavor," and doing his share of the cumulative endeavor of enriching the Chinese language, LU Xun's prolonged and difficult rendering seemed to be the only choice. For example, the first sentence in LU Xun's version is a rather prolonged one. There is a long sentence between "是有……" and "……那樣的思想", which did not cater to the reading habit of Chinese readers, so they might consider it un-fluent translation. In English language, long modifiers are allowed and considered idiomatic, but that is not the case with Chinese language. If the translator made the translation formally faithful in order to preserve the original flavor just like LU Xun did, it would be very difficult to make the version both fluent at the same time.

We can find another version of LU Xun:

競爭力應該為一切的人們開放；法律和習慣，都不應該來妨礙有最大的成功和最多的子孫的有最大的能力者。（藝術論 魯迅全集 17 卷 p42）

The English version offered by LU Xun:

... there should be open competition for all men; and the most able should not be prevented by laws and customs from **succeeding best and reaching the largest number of offspring**. (On art 魯迅全集 17 卷 p42)

The bold part in LU Xun's translation is quite awkward and un-fluent, from which we can see that LU Xun tried to keep the one-sentence structure (the bold part in the above English version) in the English version. It can be speculate that he worked hard to preserve the original flavor in translation through keeping faithful to the original sentence structure. Again here LU Xun produced multiple modifiers (有最大的成功和最多的子孫的有最大的能力者) in his Chinese version.

3. SIGNIFICANCE OF DEVIATION AND RESISTANCY

Readers found it difficult to accept this un-fluent translation especially at the very beginning. LU Xun's un-fluent translation or hard translation was criticized severely by his contemporaries, such as LIANG Shi-qiu, Zhao Jingshen (趙景深) and Qu Qiubai. Zhao Jingshen proposed the slogan "better being smooth than faithful." They even mocked LU Xun's un-fluent translation and the following is the deliberate imitation of LU Xun's un-fluent translation done by Qu Qiubai:

在我的女人不致死在途中，尤其更好些地，能使她趕到就醫的前站而能痊癒的條件之下，我將給轎夫們以各個人每天二兩銀子計算的賃銀。我甚至將給如此之多，如彼之多他們將要求的。（Qu Qiubai 1985: 379-380）

In spite of all this opposing voice, LU Xun's un-fluent translation did achieve some success by exerting influence upon both translation practice and translation theory.

4. ENRICHING CHINESE PAI-HUA

With the upsurge of Pai-hua Movement since around 1919, pai-hua came to be widely adopted as the language of writing and translation. It was believed to be a superior literary means over wenyan, capable of subtle delineation and descriptions. Although sticklers of wen yan like Lin Shu would continue to

belittle it as speech of the underclass, and others would set up pure wenyan magazines in the hope of withholding it, diffusion of pai-hua as the written language of the Chinese people was an irrevocable trend. LU Xun was a staunch proponent of pai-hua. In his translation, LU Xun adopted foreign linguistic elements to mend and enrich the yet imprecise Chinese language, while rectifying the sloppy mind of the Chinese people in the process by applying literal translation and even word-for-word translation, hence his un-fluent translation. With this spirit LU Xun would not avoid “hard translation” or “un-fluent translation” and thus a bold practitioner of “Europeanization.” Some of the foreign linguistic elements in LU Xun’s translation were finally accepted by the readers and did help enrich Chinese pai-hua. So modern readers would not feel strange when coming across the sentence like:

有了四千年吃人履歷的我，當初雖然不知道，現在明白，難見真的人！（魯迅《狂人日記》）

The above sentence is quite similar to the following sentences in LU Xun’s translation:

這樣的，是對於歷史的一般的我的見解。這是對的嗎？（論藝術 魯迅全集 17 卷 p30）

競爭力應該為一切的人們開放；法律和習慣，都不應該來妨礙有最大的成功和最多的子孫的有最大的能力者。（藝術論 魯迅全集 17 卷 p42）

In the underlined part(對於歷史的一般的我的見解), “我” (I) was modified by a complex attribute, which is absent in traditional Chinese language. But gradually it became less and less awkward. Nowadays, this expression is accepted and assimilated by Chinese language that we may find that “穿過你的黑髮的我的手” not so awkward.

There are also some other foreign expressions in LU Xun’s literary creation, from which the influence of his translation could be inferred:

然而現在呢，祇有寂寞和空虛依舊，子君卻決不再來了，而且永遠，永遠地！……

（魯迅《傷逝》）

In this sentence, LU Xun used postpositive adverbial modifier “永遠·永遠的” which is an obvious imitation of adverbial structure in European languages. We can find the original model from in his translation:

對於這，我十分的確信來回答，是的，——能夠的！是的……，可能的！

（藝術論 魯迅全集 17 卷 p43）

These expressions, seemed extremely strange at LU Xun’s time though, greatly enhance the effect of language. Although his un-fluent translation was sharply criticized and most of the foreign elements in his un-fluent translation were “kicked off” because of un-fluency and low readability, LU Xun’s un-fluent translation did help enrich Chinese pai-hua at that time. Now people get easy with such expressions like “我愛你，一生一世！”

5. DEVELOPING LITERAL TRANSLATION THEORY

Faithfulness is the bottomline of any piece of translation. But the extent of being faithful or close to the original may vary from one piece to another. The extent of faithfulness to the original varies on a scale from being very literal (or word-for-word) rendering on the one extreme to being free to the point of recreation-based imitation on the other. Throughout the history of translation in China, to cite prominent cases, Buddhist texts translated by Kumarajiva, works of social science translated by Yan Fu and popular fictions translated by Lin Shu tend to be free renderings of the original. However with LU Xun, by

contrast, the weight tips unequivocally over to the “literal” end. To be extremely faithful to the original mood and the original ways of writing, LU Xun’s translation very often leads to un-fluency and thus low readability. But LU Xun’s un-fluent translation marked a great change from the traditional free translation to literal translation, which turned people’s eyes to the study of literal translation theory and practice. Reader’s prejudice against foreign works and lack of respect for cultural others made free translation too much in vogue at LU Xun’s time in China, which conversely reinforced cultural complacency of Chinese People. This could be a vicious circle and against original intention of the Chinese literati who intelligently introduced and translated works of the West and other foreign countries in the hope that China at that time could learn from the works and found ways out. What should translators do to present the real look of the foreign works to Chinese readers? In 1935, with decades of experience in translation, LU Xun remarked, that a translator should “take two things into account: to make the rendering easy to understand, and to keep the original spirit (wording).” (凡是翻譯，必須兼顧着兩面，一當然是力求其易解，一則保存原作的丰姿……) (LU Xun 1935) (魯迅論外國文學 1982 : 47) This was an ideal that LU Xun had always aimed at. But he was keenly aware that the two principles were more often than not incompatible, even more so in his time. LU Xun said, “Owing to my inadequacy as a translator and the limitations of the Chinese language...I find my translated version abstruse and uneven, and in many places very hard to understand...” (但因為譯者的能力不夠和中國文本來的缺點，譯完一看，晦澀，甚至於難解之處也多；) (LU Xun 1929) (魯迅論外國文學 1982 : 50) Yet for the sake of preserving the “original flavor,” and doing his share of the cumulative endeavor of enriching the Chinese language, LU Xun’s prolonged and difficult rendering seemed to be the only choice (只有“束手”這一條路——就是所謂“沒有出路”——了) (LU Xun 1929) (魯迅論外國文學 1982 : 50). He argued for his un-fluent translation that he would like to preserve the original form and spirit instead of transforming the foreign works into total Chinese by high domestication.

凡是翻譯，必須兼顧著兩面，一當然是力求其易解，一則保存原作的丰姿，但這保存，卻又常常和易懂相矛盾：看不慣了。不過它原是洋鬼子，當然誰也看不慣，為比較的順眼起見，只能改換他的衣裳，卻不該削低他的鼻子，剷掉他的眼睛。我是不主張削鼻剷眼的，所以有些地方，仍然能可譯的不順口。(LU Xun 1935) (魯迅論外國文學 1982: 47-48)

LU Xun’s un-fluent translation promoted the identity of the original works, and challenged over-free translation tradition. Nowadays it is acknowledged that a translator should strive for a wise combination of literal translation and free translation, which owes much to LU Xun’s un-fluent translation acting as a gap-filling and transition from free translation to literal translation.

6. CONCLUSION

It is agreed that un-fluent translation is an untraditional translating strategy, but it is far from reasonable to just consider it as right or wrong, or ignore its significance because it is untraditional. The author expects to find underlying causes for this untraditional translating strategy as a historical translation phenomenon, which can be seen as a descriptive study of translation rather than a prescriptive one. So there is no absolute YES or NO throughout the whole analysis. LU Xun’s un-fluent translation played a role in shaping Chinese literary canon, so the impact of his translation has to be measured. Any assessment of a translation can only be made by taking into account both the process of creating it and its function in a given context (Bassnett 2004: 19). As research in Translation Studies increases and historical data become more readily available, important questions are starting to be asked, about the role of translation in shaping a literary canon, the strategies employed by translators and the norms in operation at a given point in time, the discourse of translators, the problems of measuring the impact of translation ... (Bassnett 2004: 4) So the author is in attempt to make this paper helpful in answering some of the above questions.

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